TELLS THE FACTS AND NAMES THE NAMES

CounterPunch

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The Dystopia's In the Oven, Darling

By Alexander Cockburn

Paul Roberts, *The End of Food. The Coming Crisis in the World Food Industry.* Houghton Mifflin: 2008, 390pp.

Felicity Lawrence, *Eat Your Heart Out. Why the food business is bad for the planet and your health.* Penguin: 2008, 339 pp.

Sixty years ago, books about food tended to be cheerful affairs, presaging infinite abundance. Their illustrations featured beaming mothers, lowering platters of roast beef or legs of mutton onto the Sunday table. The farmer atop his mighty combine harvester was the icon of *Life* magazine as much as of Soviet agitprop about the Brave Tractor Drivers. These days we know better. The books and pictures are dystopian. The prairies have been tilled into sterility, the underlying water tables drained by the insensate requirements of mass meat production. The homesteads of the small farmer lie crushed under the iron heel of agribusiness. The feedlot beef is lethally marbled, the old Barnsley double lamb chop, with its spinal cord, banned by law. The virtuous young decline most forms of nourishment deemed palatable by their elders. The icon now is the organic farmer hauling produce to the Farmers Market by biodiesel-powered light truck.

Both authors, Roberts (not to be confused with Paul Craig Roberts) and Lawrence, operate from this gloomy and mostly accurate perspective. They have done plenty of homework, and it's scarcely their fault if a lot of the corporate infamies and statistics that smolder angrily in their pages often have a somewhat familiar reek. After all, from the moments that provisioners in the Napoleonic

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America's Economic Crisis

Beyond the Reach of Traditional Solutions

By Paul Craig Roberts

By most accounts, the U.S. economy is in serious trouble. Robert Reich, an adviser to President elect, Obama, calls it a "mini-depression," and that designation might be optimistic. The Russian economist Mikhail Khazin says that the "U.S. will soon face a second 'Great Depression.'" It is possible that even Khazin is optimistic.

I cannot predict the future. However, I can explain what the problems are, how they differ from past times of troubles, and why traditional remedies, such as the public works programs that Reich proposes, are unlikely to succeed in reviving the U.S. economy.

Khazin points out, as have others such as University of Maryland economist Herman Daly and myself, that consumer debt expansion is the fuel that kept the U.S. economy alive. The growth of debt has outstripped the growth of income to such an extent that an increase in consumer credit and bank lending is not possible. Consumers are overburdened with debt. This fact takes monetary policy out of the picture. Americans can no longer afford to borrow more in order to consume more.

This leaves economists with fiscal policy, which, as Reich realizes, also has problems. Reich is correct that neither a reduction in marginal tax rates nor a tax rebate is likely to be very effective. Reich, a Keynesian, has an uncertain grasp of supply-side economics, but, as one who has a firm grasp, I can attest that marginal tax rates today are not the stifling influence they were prior to John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. As Art Laffer said, there are two tax rates, high and low, that will produce the same tax revenues by expanding or contracting economic activity. Marginal tax rates are no longer in the higher ranges. As for a tax rebate, Reich is correct that, in the present situation, a tax rebate would be dissipated in paying off creditors.

Reich sees the problem as a lack of aggregate demand sufficient to maintain full employment. His solution is for the government to spend "a lot" more on infrastructure projects on top of a trillion dollar budget deficit – "repairing roads and bridges, levees and ports; investing in light rail, electrical grids, new sources of energy." This spending would boost employment, wages, and aggregate demand.

I have no opposition to infrastructure projects, but who will finance the baseline trillion-dollar U.S. budget deficit plus the additional red-ink spending on infrastructure? Not Americans. The U.S. savings rate is zero or negative. Home mortgage foreclosures are in the millions. Officially, U.S. unemployment is 10 million, but if measured by pre-Clinton era standards, unemployment is much higher. Statistician John Williams, who measures the unemployment rate by the pre-Clinton standards, concludes that the rate of U.S. unemployment is about 15 per cent.

For years, the U.S. government's budget has been dependent on foreigners financing the red ink. Countries such as Japan and China and OPEC suppliers of oil to the U.S. have huge export surpluses with the U.S. They recycle the dollars by buying U.S. Treasury bonds, thus financing the U.S. government's red-ink budgets.

The open question is: how much longer will they do so?

Foreign portfolios are overweighed in dollar assets. Currently, the dollar's value is benefiting from the financial crisis, as investors flee to the reserve

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wars pioneered the organization of the mass production line and also modern methods of food preservation, the stage was set for the annihilation of both time and space in the matter of food production, marketing and consumption. The Chicago packing houses were ripe targets a century ago; the railroad barons were being savaged by populists for ruining farmers earlier still.

Roberts, a reporter from the *Seattle Times*, starts us off at an exalted moment in the history of balanced diet, with *Australopithecus* healthily subsisting on "fruits, leaves, larvae and bugs," along with modest gobbets of carrion. "His large teeth, powerful jaws and oversize gut were all adapted to coarse, fibrous plant matter ... Even his small size – he stood barely four feet tall and weighed forty pounds – was ideal for harvesting fruit among the branches." Three million years later, we arrive with Roberts at the far end of an inexorably descending arc, with 400-pound, low-income specimens of *Homo sap.*, swollen by excessive intake of calories, their guts compromised by lack of fiber, many of them diabetic, draped over their scooters, harvesting the aisles of Albertsons or Safeway for sugar, salt and fat-saturated snacks that will hike their blood pressure, clog their arteries, and propel them to an early grave.

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The prime villains in both books are the corporate food baronies. As Felicity Lawrence puts it briskly, "Modern food production involves processes that, quite apart from having little care for real nutrition, drive people off the land, stimulate migration, increase inequalities and the depth of poverty, are corrosive of society, and depend on extravagant use of natural resources, from water to oil to land, that are running out. The politics of food is, in other words, not the art of shopping but the politics of modern globalized capitalism itself." Roberts doesn't put it quite so brusquely but identifies global giants like Cargill (grain) and Tyson (chicken and fish) and the retail chains like Kroger's, Albertsons, Safeway and, above all, Wal-Mart as imposing ever lower prices on their suppliers, thus requiring ever more stringent productivity and, hence, lower profit margins, thus forcing all but the most amply capitalized farm enterprises to the wall.

Shifts can certainly be surprisingly rapid in the ways food is produced, distributed and consumed. The mightiest of the food giants can respond swiftly to a kick on the shins. So can the smaller specialty stores.

As a title, *The End of Food* seems excessively glib and merely an echo of Robert's previous book, *The End of Oil*, until one realizes that Roberts buys fairly heavily into Malthus and the Reverend Thomas' notorious predictions in the early nineteenth century that population would inevitably outstrip food supply. One of Malthus' strategies to avert this threat to the well-to-do was to locate the poor in marshland, in the expectation that pestilence would kill them off. Shrinking from such summary and tasteless strategies, the Rockefellers and other millionaires concentrated their philanthropic investments on population control and improved productivity, best symbolized by the "green revolution" of manipulated seed strains. The anti-Malthusians argued that political reform would produce stable societies, equitable income distribution and, hence, declining pressure to produce large families. Roberts sets little store by political reform, and his modern versions of Malthus' useful pestilences are prospective epidemics – striking rich and poor alike – such as avian flu. In Roberts' estimation, the bizarre diets, genetic manipulations and hideous close confinements associated with mass food production of cows, pigs and chickens make such epidemics inevitable.

Lawrence is less of a Malthusian and less gloomy overall. She doesn't see any swift reversal of the downward slide but has hope that the public appetite for organic food, linked to new forms of distribution such as community-supported agriculture, food boxes and the like, will impel shifts to the better. She exhibits no faith in any initiatives by political parties, captives of the food giants and the sort of conventional thinking, imperishably symbolized by George Bush Sr.' budget director, Richard G. Darman, who bellowed furiously in 1990 that "Americans did not fight and win the wars of the 20th century to make the world safe for green vegetables." He was defending his boss's publicly expressed distaste for broccoli.

Shifts can certainly be surprisingly rapid in the ways food is produced, distributed and consumed. The mightiest of the food giants can respond swiftly to a kick on the shins. So can the smaller specialty stores. Turn back to Elizabeth David's *English Bread and Yeast Cookery*, published 31 years ago. Page after page relates her gloom at the difficulty in getting good bread flour, or decent salt. These days, the supermarkets surrender valuable shelf space to top quality flours from organic producers. Fleur de Sel de Guerande, admittedly at high prices, nestles next to Morton's. Safeway has its onsite bakeries. This is progress, as was McDonald's shift, under intense pressure from environmental groups, to better boxes for its fast food.

So there are advances in public tastes and demands, even as Chinese-owned soybean fields chew up the Amazon's rainforest and commercial fleets strip the oceans of their fish. Absurdities trot in the wake of good intentions. Here, in the Mattole Valley, in Humboldt County,

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currency. However, sooner or later the huge outpourings of dollar debts will cause foreign creditors to draw back. Already China, America's largest creditor, has sent a signal that just such a time might be drawing near. Recently, the Chinese government asked, as they do indirectly through third parties, "Why should China help the U.S. to issue debt without end in the belief that the national credit of the U.S. can expand without limit?"

Is the rest of the world, which has demanded a financial summit to work toward a new financial order, going to permanently allocate the world's supply of capital to covering American mistakes?

If not, the bailout and the stimulus package will have to be financed by printing money.

And the bailout needs are growing. Car loans and credit card debt were also securitized and sold. As the economy worsens, credit card and car loan defaults are rising. Moreover, AIG needs more money from the government. Fannie Mae's loss has widened to $29 billion despite the $200 billion bailout. General Motors and Ford need taxpayer money to survive. General Motors says that its GMAC mortgage unit "may not survive." Deutsche Bank sees General Motors shares "as likely worthless."

What Reich and the American economic establishment do not understand is that the recession paradigm does not apply. There are no jobs waiting at U.S. manufacturers for a demand stimulus to pull Americans back into work. The problem is not a liquidity problem. To the contrary, there have been many years of too much liquidity. Credit has grown far more than production. Indeed, U.S. production has been moved offshore. Jobs that used to support the growth of American incomes and the tax bases of cities and states have moved, along with U.S. GDP, to China and elsewhere. The work is gone. All that are left are credit card and mortgage debts.

Jobs that used to support the growth of American incomes and the tax bases of cities and states have moved, along with U.S. GDP, to China and elsewhere. The work is gone. All that are left are credit card and mortgage debts.

Economists associate economic depression with price deflation. However, traditionally, debts that are beyond an economy's ability to service are inflated away. This suggests that the coming depression will be an inflationary depression. Instead of falling prices mitigating the effects of falling employment, higher prices will go hand in hand with rising unemployment – a situation worse than the Great Depression.

The incompetent Clinton and Dubya administrations, unregulated banksters and Wall Street criminals, greedy CEOs, and a no-think economics profession have destroyed America's economy.

What is the remedy for simultaneous inflation and unemployment?

Three decades ago, the solution was supply-side economics. Easy monetary policy had pushed up consumer demand, but high tax rates had curtailed output. It was more profitable for firms to allow prices to rise than for them to invest and increase output. Supply-side economics changed the policy mix. Monetary policy was tightened and marginal tax rates were reduced, thus stimulating output instead of inflation.

Today the problem is different. The U.S. has abused the reserve currency role, thus endangering its credit worthiness and the exchange value of the dollar. Jobs have moved offshore. The budget deficit is huge and growing. If foreigners will not finance the widening gap, the printing presses will be employed or the government will not be able to pay its bills.

The bailout funds have been wasted. The expensive bailout does not address the problem of falling employment and rising mortgage defaults. Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson could not see beyond saving Goldman Sachs and his

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an hour or so south of Eureka, I feed my horses on hay grown on a pasture half a mile up river from my house. Since the hayfield, though never sprayed or fertilized, is not officially classed as organic, the manure from my horses, if spread anywhere in my garden or orchard, would render my apples ineligible for an "organic" label. My recourse would be to import "organic" hay by truck from Modesto, 330 miles south of me, in California's Central Valley, at a cost of several thousand dollars plus a couple of hundred gallons of diesel fuel vented over the landscape. The term "organic" becomes extremely malleable in the hands of a state legislator, with an agriculture industry lobbyist standing at his elbow, checkbook in hand.

The saddest story of all is land reform and here, as Roberts and Lawrence seem to concede, there isn't much of a silver lining, though the sky is getting a little lighter in Latin America. Land barons are tenacious. Governments and international bureaucracies have a matchless tendency to do the wrong thing. All the same, excessive doomsaying doesn't get one far. The benign food movements of today, such as they are, had their roots in a more optimistic time, half a century ago. As manure, optimism is usually productive. **CP**

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bankster friends. The Paulson bailout does nothing except take troubled assets off banks' books and put them on the overburdened taxpayers' books, thus endangering the U.S. Treasury's credit rating.

What the Bush regime has done is to stick the taxpayers with the banks' mistakes. An intelligent government would have used the money to refinance the troubled mortgages and stop the defaults. By saving the mortgages from default, the banks' balance sheets would have been made secure. By failing to deal with the subprime crisis, Bush and Congress have added a financial crisis to the exhaustion of consumer demand and the problems of financing huge trade and budget deficits.

Belatedly, Paulson has realized his mistake. On November 12, Paulson announced, "We have continued to examine the relative benefits of purchasing illiquid mortgage-related assets. Our assessment at this time is that this is not the most effective way to use [bailout] funds."

The financial crisis has cost taxpayers far more than the amount of the bailout. Americans' savings and pension funds have been devastated. Americans in investment partnerships, who have been required by IRS rules to pay income taxes on gains in the partnerships' portfolios, have had the accumulated multi-year gains wiped out. They have paid taxes on years of "capital gains" that have disappeared, thus doubling their losses.

America's economic troubles will rapidly accumulate if the dollar loses its reserve currency role. To protect the dollar and the Treasury's credit standing, the U.S. needs to curtail its foreign borrowing by reducing its budget deficit. It can do this by halting its gratuitous wars and slashing its unnecessary military spending, which exceeds that of the rest of the world combined. The empire has run out of resources, and the 700 overseas bases must be closed.

Can Americans afford massive infrastructure spending when they cannot afford health care? In Florida, a Blue Cross Blue Shield group policy for a 60-year-old woman costs $14,100 annually, and this is a policy with deductibles and copayments. Supplementary policies from AARP to fill some of the gaps in Medicare can cost retirees $3,300 annually. When one looks at the economic situation of the vast majority of Americans, it is astonishing that the Bush regime regards wars in the Middle East and taxpayer bailouts of Wall Street criminals as a good use of scarce resources.

U.S. corporations, which have moved their production for U.S. markets offshore in order to drive up their share prices and provide their CEOs with multimillion dollar bonuses, can be provided with a different set of incentives that encourage the corporations to bring employment back to the U.S.A. For example, the corporate income tax can be restructured to tax corporations according to the value-added in the U.S. The higher the value-added in the U.S., the lower the tax rate; the lower the value-added, the higher the tax rate.

The U.S. needs to curtail its foreign borrowing by reducing its budget deficit. The empire has run out of resources, and the 700 overseas bases must be closed.

Cutting the budget deficit by halting pointless wars and unnecessary military spending and reducing the trade deficit by bringing jobs back to America are simple tasks compared to confronting inflationary depression.

The world has had enough of American irresponsibility and is taking away the reins. At the November 15 economic summit, the world will begin the process of imposing a new financial order on the U.S. in exchange for continued lending to the bankrupt "superpower." With bailouts eating up the world's supply of capital, continued foreign financing for Washington's wars of aggression is out of the picture.

CP

Paul Craig Roberts is a regular *CounterPunch* contributor. He was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in the Reagan administration. He is co-author of *The Tyranny of Good Intentions*. He can be reached at: paulcraigroberts@yahoo.com.

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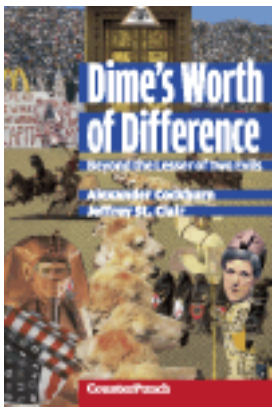

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Looking Back at CAPBOMB

What Were Those 1960s Terrorists Thinking Anyway?

By Judy Gumbo Albert

This is the inside story of how my late husband Stew Albert and I became prime suspects in CAPBOM, which is the FBI codename for the 1971 Weather Underground bombing of the United States Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. Sarah Palin and her cohort of extreme right-wing really, really scary people used the Capitol bombing to link President elect Obama with the not nearly as scary 1960s Weatherman and 1997 Chicago Citizen of the Year Bill Ayres. At the time, my widely quoted take on the Capitol bombing was: "We didn't do it, but we dug it."

As a former 60s protestor, celebrating with everyone else I know the results of this historic election, I'd like to give my personal point of view about the attacks on the 1960s that were made during the campaign – specifically "guilt by association" and "domestic terrorism." And also to reflect a bit on how I feel about those issues today.

In the spring of 1971, on the day the Capitol bombing takes place, I'm living in our nation's capital organizing an anti-war demonstration. Along with Stew, Abbie and Anita Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, his girlfriend Nancy Kurshan and satiric journalist Paul Krassner, I'm an original Yippie. We, Yippies, believe in the politics of theater. We call ourselves Groucho Marxists and use comedy to turn serious issues on their head. We're cultural revolutionaries who raise political awareness by having as much fun and getting as much media attention as we can. We're a youth movement who doesn't believe in hierarchy: every Yippie is her or his own leader. Our favorite Bob Dylan mantra is: Don't follow leaders, watch the parking meters.

Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke are not the first to throw money at Wall Street. In the spring of 1968, Abbie, Jerry and the rest of us stopped trading on the New York Stock Exchange when we threw $1 and $5 bills at greedy stockbrokers, who grabbed at the money floating down from a balcony. We, Yippies, brought the New York Stock Exchange to a halt for a mere $250.

By the summer of 1968, at the Democratic Convention in Chicago, we're running a pig named Pigasus for president as a send-up to protest the election and President Nixon's unjust and illegal Vietnam War. In what is to become an iconic American moment, Yippies, mainstream anti-war demonstrators, the media, and even a member of the British Parliament are severely gassed and beaten by the Chicago police.

I saw the Weathermen as courageous enough to take the lead in our very own, 60s style Boston Tea Party. In my view, they blew up a U.S. Capitol bathroom on my behalf and on behalf of the entire anti-war movement.

But three years later, by the time of the Capitol bombing, it's becoming more and more difficult to find the fun in protest. All of us in the anti-war movement are frustrated by the seemingly endless parade of atrocities being committed in Vietnam, which we see in living color at home on TV every night.

The Mayday Tribe

I'm staying temporarily in Washington, D.C., in a collective house at 2226 M Street.

Chicago Conspiracy 8 defendant and anti-war activist Rennie Davis and at least 30 others live in the surrounding neighborhood. The M Street house is situated directly across the street from a red-brick fire station that, in addition to fire trucks, is outfitted with surveillance cameras, so overtly visible in the front window that I occasionally lead a group of us out front just to dance and wave at the cameras.

We call ourselves the Mayday Tribe. Our name – Mayday – is intended to convey an urgent distress call about the war to the American people and motivate protestors to come to a demonstration scheduled for three months later. We're putting together a People's Peace Treaty on behalf of the American public, to draw attention to the Nixon administration's obdurate refusal to make peace. Our admittedly utopian demonstration slogan states, "If the government won't stop the war, we'll stop the government."

We predict that thousands of people will take to the streets and block traffic to protest the war and this recent escalation in bombing.

At my initiation, Stew and I have officially broken off our two-year-old romance. As I recall, I feel fine. Liberated, in fact. I have no qualms about publicly labeling Stew an arrogant, patronizing, sexist, male chauvinist pig, which, looking back on it, was about 35 per cent true, and 65 per cent women's movement PC rhetoric. Besides, we're still on speaking terms. I realize he's lonely without me and know I can still get him to do almost anything I want, so I ask him to come and visit from New York and bring with him, on the plane, a large satchel of high quality marijuana, donated to the cause by a sympathetic New York City lawyer.

Early in the morning of Monday, March 1, 1971, the M Street phone rings. We're told that members of the Weather Underground, originally known as Weatherman ("You don't need a Weatherman to know which way the wind blows" – Dylan), are taking credit for placing a bomb in an out-of-the-way men's bathroom of the United States Capitol building. The Weathermen say, "We have attacked the Capitol because it is, along with the White House and the Pentagon, the worldwide symbol of the government which is now attacking Indochina."

When I first hear this news, I feel exhilarated. Irrationally exuberant, in fact. My reaction is documented by an unknown person, possibly an informant who, in a later legal affidavit, describes me and the others in M Street as "exultant" – which is not so far removed from my own rec-

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ollection. But why, you quite rightly ask – and I ask myself the same question – did I feel so positive about this act, especially when placing a bomb is something I could never do – or did – myself?

At the time, I felt like a cheerleader rooting for David in the face of Goliath. And, as an anti-war activist, I considered dissent to be patriotic. I saw the Weathermen as courageous enough to take the lead in our very own, 60s style Boston Tea Party. In my view, they blew up a U.S. Capitol bathroom on my behalf and on behalf of the entire anti-war movement. I appreciated that they did so for the most compelling of reasons – to stop the endless, brutal war in Vietnam and Laos. Their act empowered me. Which is why I could, in good conscience, in 1971, make the statement: "We didn't do it, but we dug it."

Hands Up!

Immediately after the bombing, M-Street house surveillance intensifies. Firemen swarm. Burly new guys start hanging around outside the firehouse. They didn't look and weren't even dressed like firemen. Stew and Leslie Bacon, a young, anti-war activist friend, decide to take a walk to Lafayette Park, directly in front of the White House. Beyond the macho of it, I can't speculate about Stew's motives. Most likely I disapproved because, at that particular moment in our on-again, off-again relationship, almost anything he said or did was enough to provoke my disapproval.

As the tension-filled day after bombing dragged on, it became increasingly clear to me that there's no time like the present to get the hell out of Dodge. Leslie chooses to remain in D.C. I grab Stew, Colin and Michael, two other M-Street residents, plus a couple of bags of clothing, and we hop into my 1969 dark blue VW Beetle, named Lindequist. (When I bought the car, I found the previous owner's name, Lindequist, inscribed on the dashboard; I currently drive Lindequist 3.) A few blocks into our getaway, I realize I've forgotten my all-time favorite hat – a fisherman's cap, made out of fluffy brown Canadian beaver pelts with a brown leather front brim. Stew and I immediately get into a huge fight. Stew, the pragmatist, now recognizes the wisdom of leaving town as quickly as possible. I, the Yippie fashionista, will not leave my favorite hat to the mercy of the pigs. It's my car, I'm the driver: we circle back. I run in, save my hat and, like Keystone Cops, we once again beat a retreat. There's no PETA yet to make my hat a political issue.

But in the early evening, just as it's getting dark and chilly, and we've reached the outskirts of Baltimore, I suddenly notice flashing lights behind me. I pull Lindequist over and hear a loud, gruff male voice coming over a loudspeaker, "get out of the car with your hands up." Shotguns at our heads, the four of us are quickly spread eagled against the VW. Colin is shaking so hard I think he might pee himself – but he doesn't. The boys are put in one police car; I'm alone in another for what feels like hours. I'm buzzy with adrenaline and really bored sitting alone in my personal Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome cage. I can't see much except cops and the boys' heads in front of me in the other car, so all I can do is bite my nails and obsess. Lindequist and the satchels are thoroughly searched. Eventually we are released and, in true Yippie absurdist fashion, are given a ticket for a bald tire by a local highway patrolman, who signs his name James Bond.

I'm a widow. I've experienced the excruciating pain brought on by death of your loved one. I can't condone action that results in the death of human beings.

We're not Weathermen. It literally didn't occur to me that we were being stopped because of the Capitol bombing. I am really grateful we left the marijuana back in D.C.

Five days before Mayday, on April 28, Leslie, who at the time is 19 years old, is arrested in Washington, D.C., by the FBI and appears a few days later before Judge John Sirica, later of Watergate fame. Leslie is taken to a Seattle hotel where she is held captive in a room for weeks, with no access to family or friends, only to lawyers. She is questioned harshly about the Capitol bombing, but there's nothing she can tell them because there's nothing she knows. On May 1, the Weathermen make public a communiqué addressed to Leslie's mother: "Your confidence in Leslie is justified because she is completely innocent of any involvement in the bombing of the U.S. Capitol. We know this for a fact because, as the FBI and Justice Department well know, our organization did the bombing."

Leslie told me recently that her mother, an upscale, conservative California homemaker, said to the national and international press staking out their Atherton home, "I don't see why everyone is so upset about someone blowing up a building when the government is blowing up people."

Standard operating procedure for FBI agents and prosecutors, then and now, is to target young women whom they consider potential "weak links" in an evidentiary chain and most likely to give up information. These young women become their special victims. I've come to believe that Leslie's kidnapping, imprisonment and resulting unwanted national media attention is the moral equivalent of a rape. The federal prosecutor and the FBI violated a 19-year-old woman's trust and privacy, and, even though today Leslie is teacher and grandmother, this incident still poisons her sense of security and well-being.

Facing My Fear

I learned at the Democratic Convention in Chicago in 1968 that, when you're in a true "face your fear" moment, you need to take action. Don't delay. Don't procrastinate. Don't overthink the consequences. By facing your fear, you can discover inside yourself the courage to take your life – and your freedom – into your own hands.

This is one such moment. My mantra serves me well. By the time I drop Stew off in New York City, check in with the marijuana-donating lawyer for free legal advice, and drive back home to Boston, I've talked myself into believing I've emerged from this incident shaken but unbowed.

In Boston, as my FBI files later reveal, agents have evicted my next-door neighbor and ensconced themselves in an adjoining apartment. A group of Boston women, me included, take over a building at 888 Mass. Ave and turn it into a

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women's center. The takeover becomes a springboard for the women's demonstration that preceded Mayday – the April 10 Women's March on the Pentagon. The march attracts no more than 500 women – but the contingent I lead marches under a beautiful, purple Janis Joplin banner.

Our Mayday demonstration doesn't stop the war – or the government. The day before the demonstration, rock concert permits are canceled. Police, reprising Chicago 1968 and presaging the 2008 Republican Convention, teargas as many demonstrators as they can; they destroy tents and use other coercive tactics to force protestors to leave a day early. Many do.

The remaining demonstrators begin assembling at 6 a.m. When it's time to get up, I make a strategic decision, based purely on personal sloth, to let myself and my Boston affinity group sleep in – we'd been smoking too much of that dope and partying the night before. By the time we arrive downtown, streets are empty. Traffic is flowing smoothly. Stew and Abbie are among 7,000 demonstrators already arrested and locked up in an emergency detention center next to RFK stadium. Some say Mayday is the largest mass arrest in U.S. history.

For me, Mayday is a bust. No pun intended. And it's my own fault.

My failure of leadership is what my new fiancé David calls an AFOG – another f------- opportunity for growth. It's a harsh lesson that stays with me: don't wimp out just before the end is in sight. Follow through on your commitment. No excuses. And never, ever smoke really strong dope the night before a big demo.

Duh.

Three weeks after Mayday, Stew receives his subpoena to a grand jury investigating the Capitol bombing. He burns it publicly in New Haven to support Black Panther Party Chairman Bobby Seale, who is on trial there at the time.

I receive my grand jury subpoena in Boston a few days after Stew. Why me? Perhaps no one got the memo that Stew and I had broken up. Or, perhaps the FBI was pissed about my arrogant dance in front of the cameras on M-Street's front porch. Or, maybe the feds just wanted to "round up the usual suspects."

The federal prosecutor, responsible for all grand juries investigating Weather Underground bombings, is a smartly dressed, slick-haired man named Guy Goodwin. Goodwin also convened a grand jury to investigate another equally false allegation – that Rev. Phil Berrigan and Elizabeth McAllister, a nun, are plotting to kidnap Henry Kissinger. He harassed Vietnam Veterans Against the War so much that, in 1972, they filed a $1.8 million civil suit against him.

My first response to my grand jury subpoena is to go numb. I'm facing a possible 20-year sentence. My "face your fear" mantra just doesn't cut it. Denial works a whole lot better. Stew writes that I "buried the great fear deep in her soul and beamed smiles that would bounce off the moon... but underneath the smiles, Judy was truly terrified. Even though we had officially parted, I knew that I still loved her, which meant that I had to look out for her so that, as a strange Canadian in a stranger America she would not come to harm."

I paint my forehead with a Rainbow, cover one cheek with a woman's symbol, the other with an NLF flag, and I put a marijuana leaf on my chin.

On a PBS interview, all I can say about being subpoenaed is: "It's annoying. Uncool. But our lawyers will take care of it. Nothing to worry about." Perhaps, it's a positive thing that I grew up in a dysfunctional, alcoholic family – repression and denial are terrific short-term survival techniques for really tough times.

Pretty soon, my inner Yippie re-emerges and my "face your fear" mantra kicks in. Stew and I decide the appropriate Yippie response is to hold a press conference in front of the Capitol Building.

I paint my forehead with a Weather Underground Rainbow, cover one cheek with a woman's symbol, the other with an NLF (otherwise known as Viet Cong) flag, and I put a green marijuana leaf on my chin. And yes, that is a cigarette I'm smoking – I quit for good a few years later. In my press statement, I quote a Weatherman communiqué that says: "The Weather Underground bombed the Capitol to bring a smile and a wink to all the kids in America who hate their government."

Then I pull off my 15 minutes of fame by adding, "We didn't do it but we dug it."

The recent media hysteria about the Capitol bombing has prompted me to revisit, if not reconsider, how I feel today about my long ago "didn't do it, but dug it" statement. It's one of those situations where I really miss Stew's advice and counsel. What would Stewie say?

The summer of 1971, I make a one time appearance before the Grand Jury. I arrive surrounded by a contingent of women and dressed up like a witch. In fact I am a member of W.I.T.C.H. -- an early New York City based women's liberation group appropriately named the Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell. Back then, you could use the word terrorist in a joke and not be labeled unpatriotic.

When it comes time for me to make my appearance before the Grand Jury, I walk, alone but unintimidated, in my long witchy dress, into an old, dimly lit New York City jury room. Two rows of older men and women, black and white, arms crossed, stare stonily at me. On our lawyers' advice I refuse to testify. Instead I cite Constitutional Amendments 1, 4, 5, 6 and 9. These numbers become indelibly imprinted in my memory – although, as a Canadian, I was at the time a little fuzzy about what each Amendment actually stood for. But now I get it why America's founders gave us freedom of speech and due process. It's another reason I consider myself a patriot – just like Abbie and Anita who named their son America.

A few months after my Grand Jury appearance, our subpoenas are quashed -- I assume because they can find no evidence of wrongdoing. That guard who claimed to Goodwin he saw Stew at the Capitol building was either set-up, a liar or befuddled – or perhaps he conflated the historic Capitol building with Lafayette Park. It's a huge relief. Guilt by association loses out to the real world. In the 1980s, in an act of true Yippie bravado, I buy a car with the proceeds of our successful lawsuit against the FBI and get for it a "CAPBOM' license plate.

In the 1980s, shortly after Stew and I moved to Portland, Oregon, I was driving down a street and saw some picketers. My initial gut response is to identify with the protestors, to honk my horn in support,

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but as I get closer I realize they are anti-choice fanatics picketing what turns out to be the Planned Parenthood affiliate where I will later be employed. The anti-abortion fundamentalists and right-wing extremists – that same breed of bottom feeder who sent hundreds of e-mail death threats to Bill Ayres -- have it all over the Weather Underground when it comes to domestic terrorism.

Lest we forget, just over a decade ago this country witnessed a horrific killing spree carried out by our very own, home grown American terrorists: in 1993, abortion provider Dr. David Gunn was assassinated; Dr. John Britton, another abortion provider, was shot in 1994; in that same year 25 year old Planned Parenthood receptionist Shannon Lowney and women's clinic worker Leanne Nichols were murdered within hours of each other. In 1995, in the worst case of domestic terrorism this country has ever seen, right wing racist gun nut Timothy McVeigh and two of his "pals" killed 168 people including 19 children by setting a bomb in the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. In 1998, an anti-choice fanatic killed abortion provider Dr. Barnett Slepian.

The Weathermen bombed bathrooms. They destroyed property. Which is why calling them "domestic terrorists" doesn't resonate with me. In every case of a Weather Underground bombing there was an advance call warning people to get out of the building. The Weathermen who died were three of their own. Conflating Bill Ayres and the Capitol bombing with Osama Bin Laden's terroristic destruction of the Twin Towers feels like an enormous truth stretch. It disrespects those who died.

I'm a widow. I've experienced the excruciating pain brought on by death of your loved one. I can't condone action that results in the death of human beings.

In my humble opinion, members of the Weather Underground turned into purists who so completely idealized the liberation struggles of anyone who was African-American, Vietnamese, or what we used to call "third world" that they fell into an uncritical objectification of violence for its own sake. Their stated doctrine of "lead by example," resulted in groups attempting to imitate Weather tactics with devastating results. In 1970, an unaffiliated collective bombed the University of Wisconsin's Army Math building, tragically killing a researcher. In the 1980s, a splinter group that included former Weathermen killed a guard and two policemen in a disastrous, bungled robbery of a Brinks truck. Most of them are still in jail.

Personally, I feel this may be an appropriate moment for truth and reconciliation, for former Weather Underground leaders to publicly acknowledge these collateral deaths, in addition to the deaths of their own comrades. And then they should be forgiven – and forgive themselves. CP

Judy Gumbo Albert is an original member of the 1960s countercultural anti-war group known as the Yippies. Judy is co-author of *The Sixties Papers: Documents of a Rebellious Decade* (Greenwood Press, 1984) and *The Conspiracy Trial* (Bobbs Merrill, 1970). For many years, Judy was an award winning fundraiser for Planned Parenthood. She is currently living in Berkeley, California, writing a memoir titled *Yippie Girl*. Her chapter about the Battle of Chicago, 1968, can be found at http://www.counterpunch.org/alberto8282008.html. Judy can be reached at yippiegirl@gmail.com.

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